

Approved For Release 2004/10/28 : CIA-RDP88-01314R000300600063-8

## Press Agency in Soviet Gets New Chief

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Special to The New York Times

MOSCOW, Sept. 10—Novosti, the Soviet Union's press and information agency, announced today the retirement of Boris S. Burkov, who guided the agency since its formation in 1961 into one of the world's largest operations of its kind.

Mr. Burkov, 62 years old, will be replaced by Ivan I. Udaltsov, 52, a historian and party official.

Mr. Udaltsov will inherit one of the most dynamic and controversial agencies in the Soviet Union. With at least two buildings in Moscow, Novosti is staffed by many of the Soviet Union's ablest writers and photographers.

It has many foreign clients who pay Novosti thousands of dollars for exclusive rights to articles or film clips. It has also more than its share of detractors.

### Equivalent of U.S.I.A.

Novosti acts primarily as the principal information service abroad, much as the United States Information Agency. But Novosti also distributes feature material to Soviet newspapers, publishes its own books in Russian and other languages, and maintains a near monopoly on the shooting of television film for foreign broadcasting companies.

Because of its close contacts with foreigners, particularly newsmen and editors, it has been accused of serving as a front for the secret police, but such a link has not been substantiated.

The size of Novosti's staff is

not known but it is believed to rival or surpass that of Tass, the official press agency.

Although both Tass and Novosti are rigorously controlled by party and state, Novosti is technically a nongovernmental organization, formed on the initiative of Soviet societies and journalist groups in 1961 to disseminate "truthful information about the Soviet Union in foreign countries."

Mr. Burkov's departure came as a surprise, but is only the latest in a series of changes in news and information agencies. Earlier this year, Leonid M. Zamyatin, who had headed the Foreign Ministry's Press Department, was named general director of Tass, replacing Sergei G. Lapin, who in turn became head of radio and television.

Yuri N. Chernyakov, a former diplomat in Washington, took over Mr. Zamyatin's post. Vladimir I. Stepanov, the head of the party's Propaganda Department, and Nikolai A. Mikhailov, the chairman of the State Committee for Publishing, were also removed, but no new men have yet been named to their jobs.

There is no pattern to these changes, although there have been unverified reports about high-level dissatisfaction with the way propaganda was carried out for Lenin's 100th birthday in April. There have also been reports that the leadership believed the anti-Zionist campaign in the winter went into excesses.

Little is known about Mr. Udaltsov in journalistic circles.

He was last believed involved in ideological work and was reported to have been a political counselor in the Soviet embassy in Prague in 1968.

Tass said that Mr. Udaltsov, who is 52, graduated from Moscow University and has the degree of candidate of historical sciences. He served as director of the Institute of Slavic Studies, Tass said, and has done some work for historical journals.

Tass said that for many years, Mr. Udaltsov held "responsible party and public jobs."

Novosti, which occupies several buildings in Moscow, has contacts with more than 100 foreign news agencies and with more than 6,000 papers, magazines, publishing houses, radio and television companies abroad.

Among other things, Novosti provides feature articles on Soviet life and policies for foreign media, arranges visits and interviews for foreign newsmen, and publishes material in many languages.

In the United States, Novosti is responsible for publication of Soviet Life, a glossy monthly distributed under the cultural exchange program.

Foreign television companies, which are not permitted to have their own full-time camera crews here, are obliged to use Novosti services. Since Novosti as a rule does not film scenes it regards as contrary to the Soviet interest, television newsmen have complained about a censorship that the writing press does not have.